

Department of Justice High-Risk Metropolitan Area Interoperability Assistance Project *Portland, Oregon*



Addressing Interoperability

The Department of Justice (DOJ) Wireless Management Office (WMO) has been working toward improving long-term federal interagency communications across the Nation. As an interim step, and as a response to a request from the House/Senate CJS Appropriations Subcommittee staff, the DOJ WMO has been leading the High-Risk Metropolitan Area Interoperability Assistance Project to provide targeted cities with basic and immediate interagency communications capabilities among local, state, and federal agencies during emergency response. Twenty-five cities were selected using criteria that included perceived risk and population size. As stakeholders in 1 of the 25 cities, Portland metropolitan area, local, state, and federal public safety agencies have been working collaboratively with the DOJ WMO to address basic interoperable communications.

Participating Agencies

Partnership among Portland area local, state, and federal public safety agencies has been instrumental in the development of a comprehensive interoperability solution set. Participating agencies have included—

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)
- City of Portland
- Clackamas County
- Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (Washington State)
- Columbia County
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Multnomah County
- Oregon State Police
- U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- U.S. Marshals Service (USMS)
- U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS)
- U.S. Secret Service (USSS)
- Washington County

Key Successes

DOJ and area stakeholders have planned to successfully achieve significant interoperability and emergency response communications improvements in the Portland metropolitan area through the implementation of two interoperability solutions. The solutions will support the use of existing interoperability resources and disparate communications systems by extending coverage, capacity, and availability to more public safety agencies. Additionally, in the course of meeting this project's interoperability goals, stakeholders were able to expand the working relationships among local, state, and federal agencies to resolve interoperability objectives for the area.

The first solution planned for interagency communications leverages the City of Portland and the DOJ Integrated Wireless Network (IWN) radio systems. The City of Portland utilizes an 800 megahertz (MHz) trunked radio system that has connectivity to the counties of Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah and Washington as well as the Oregon State Police. The IWN is a very high frequency (VHF) federal trunked radio system with planned use by

the ATF, DEA, FBI, and USMS. In addition, direct access to the IWN will be available to CBP, ICE, USCG, USPIS, and USSS.

The City of Portland and IWN trunked radio systems will be directly connected via a control station audio patch allowing on demand access to established interoperability talk groups within each system. Using control stations, the second solution will establish connectivity between the IWN and Columbia County and the IWN and the Oregon State Police. The level of interoperability among local, state and federal agencies will be substantially enhanced through these interoperable solutions.

To address management issues related to the planned interoperability effort, DOJ worked with several stakeholders to develop standard operating procedures (SOP) to outline the use of interoperability talkgroups and to ensure proper operation of interoperability resources. Assistance also included developing a talkgroup naming template.

Moving Forward

The cooperation and support between participating agencies and DOJ WMO provided scalable solutions designed to give additional agencies access to the interoperability solutions. Sustained operations, maintenance, and support of these interoperability solutions will be coordinated by key stakeholders. These efforts, along with stakeholder support, will ensure continuity in addressing interoperable communications among public safety agencies in the Portland metropolitan area.

The interoperability solutions are expected to be fully functional by the end of 2006 in conjunction with completion of the IWN build out in the Portland area.

Contact Information

If you would like to know more about this initiative and the interoperability solutions, please contact—

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DOJ IWN

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